

Message Text

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70

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-02 PA-01 PRS-01 /059 W

----- 082876

R 081315Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 143

INFO CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCPWC HONOLULU

CINCPACFLT

CNO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

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CINCUSNAVEUR ALSO FOR POLAD, CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CFED, MILI, SA

SUBJECT: FLYING THE SAUDI FLAG

REF: STATE 14687

1. THE EMBASSY REPZATED THE REFTEL TO CONGEN DHAHRAN AND REQUESTED ITS VIEWS, INCLUDING THOSE OF U.S. OFFICIALS AT ARAMCO IF CONGEN THOUGHT THEY WOULD BE HELPFUL. OUR CONSENSUS FOLLOWING CONSULTATION IS THAT DISCONTINUING THE PRACTISE OF FLYING THE SAUDI FLAG AT THE FORE OF U.S. NAVY SHIPS ENTERING RAS TANURA WOULD NOT GO UNNOTICED AND WOULD INJECT AN IRRITANT INTO SAUDI-U.S. RELATIONS.

2. WE ARE CONSCIOUS THAT MANY PROBLEMS ARE WITH US TODAY IN AGGRAVATED FORM BECAUSE WE PUT OFF TAKING ACTION ON THEM BECAUSE THE TIME NEVER SEEMED RIGHT FOR FACING UP TO
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THEM. WE JUDGE THAT THE TIME IS NOT RIGHT FOR TAKING UP

THIS PARTICULAR QUESTION BUT CANNOT WITH ANY ASSURANCE CLAIM THAT IT WILL BE EASIER TO DEAL WITH IN THE FUTURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THIS ALSO STRIKES US AS THE SORT OF PROBLEM WE CAN LIVE WITH FOR SOME TIME; WE HAVE ALREADY TOLERATED THE ANOMALY FOR OVER 25 YEARS.

3. WE WOULD PREFER TO SEE THINGS CONTINUE AS THEY ARE. HOWEVER, IT IS FEASIBLE TO DISCONTINUE THE PRACTICE IF WE ARE WILLING TO PUT UP WITH A NEW IRRITANT--RELATIVELY MINOR--IN OUR RELATIONS. IT DOES NOT SEEM WORTH IT TO US, BUT WE CONCEDE THAT WE MIGHT NOT BE IN THE BEST POSITION TO JUDGE.

4. IF A DECISION IS MADE TO DISCONTINUE THE PRACTICE, IT SHOULD BE DONE WITHOUT PRIOR ANNOUNCEMENT. EXPLANATIONS IF REQUIRED SHOULD BE HANDLED AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL. IF WE GET TOO MUCH HZAT WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO BEGIN FLYING THE FLAG AGAIN. WE WOULD BE OPPOSED TO EXPENDING TOO MUCH GOOD WILL IN PUSHING THIS ISSUE.

5. PURSUANT TO MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND REQUESTS WE HAVE BEEN OBTAINING DIPLOMATIC CLEARANCES FOR THE FALCON TANKERS. IN VIEW OF INFO PARA 3 REFTTEL SHOULD WE DISCONTINUE THE PRACTICE?

AKINS

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
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